花は咲く 2

日高ショーコ

Does the flower bloom?

Hidaka Shoko

STORY

SAKURAI, WHO WORKS FOR AN AD AGENCY ACCIDENTLY BUMPED INTO A YOUNG MAN ON HIS WAY HOME. HE ENDED UP DROPPING HIS BUSINESS MATERIALS WHICH INCLUDED A MUCH NEEDED MAGAZINE, WHICH BECAME RUINED. LUCKILY, THE YOUNG MAN, MINAGAWA YOUICHI, A COLLEGE STUDENT, HAD THE SAME MAGAZINE AND ASKED SAKURAI TO DROP BY HIS HOME TO GET IT. MINAGAWA OWNS A BIG OLD HOUSE THAT IS NOW USED AS A BOARDING HOME. SAKURAI THOUGHT MINAGAWA WAS UNSOCIABLE AND HARD TO GET ALONG WITH AT FIRST, BUT AS HE BEGINS TO VISIT THE HOUSE MORE AND MORE, HE STARTS TO NOTICE HE MAY HAVE A CRUSH ON YOUICHI, AND YOUICHI IS ALSO STARTING TO GROW FEELINGS FOR SAKURAI, AS WELL....!

Katsuragi Masafumi

A FAMOUS DIRECTOR IN THE AD INDUSTRY. HE WAS A FRIEND OF YOUICHI'S FATHER, YOUSUKE, AND STILL CARES FOR YOUICHI.

Fujimoto Kouki

YOUICHI'S CLASSMATE. HE'S FASCINATED WITH HIM AND URGED YOUICHI TO LET HIM LIVE IN HIS HOUSE.

Minagawa Youichi

A STUDENT AT AN ART COLLEGE. HE'S THE OWNER OF A BIG OLD BOARDING HOUSE. HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD SAKURAI IS UNFRIENDLY. HE SEEMS TO BE INDIFFERENT TO EVERYTHING, AND PREFERS TO LIVE AN UNEVENTFUL LIFE. HE HAS BEGUN TO LIKE SAKURAI.

Sakurai Kazuaki

AN ART DIRECTOR FOR AN AD AGENCY. HE'S BEEN SUCCESSFUL SINCE HIS TWENTIES, BUT LATELY FEELS OVERLOADED WITH WORK. HE DIDN'T LIKE YOUICHI FIRST, BUT CAME TO REALIZE HE'S IN LOVE WITH HIM.

Minagawa Shouta

YOUICHI'S COUSIN. HE WAS TAKEN IN BY THE MINAGAWA FAMILY WHEN HE WAS A CHILD. HE'S BEEN LIVING WITH YOUICHI EVER SINCE YOUICHI ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL AND MOVED BACK TO THE HOUSE IN IZUMISAWA.

Iwasaki Takeo

YOUICHI'S COUSIN. HE'S BEEN LIVING WITH YOUICHI AND SHOUTA EVER SINCE HE ENTERED A COLLEGE.

Contents

第 7 話
— 5 —

第 8 話
— 31 —

第 9 話
— 49 —

第 10 話
— 95 —

第 11 話
— 129 —

第 12 話
— 173 —

あとがき
— 190 —

第7話

I'VE LONG FORGOTTEN WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO FALL IN LOVE.
Wow... SO MANY CAKES!
RUSTLE
WHAT ARE THEY FOR?
RUSTLE
HUH? DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU LIKE SWEETS?
I'M NOT PICKY ABOUT FOOD.
THIS ONE IS FOR YOU, TAKE-SAN.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SAKURAI-SAN.
OH... YOU'RE WELCOME...
SO...
GLANCE
I DON'T LIKE SWEETS, BUT MAYBE I SHOULD EAT ONE.
OH, YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
I BROUGHT THEM BECAUSE I THOUGHT SHOUTA LIKED SWEETS.
Umaaaa
WHEN DID I SAY I LIKED SWEETS?
...
WHAT IS IT?

HUH?
...
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
YOU NORMALLY WOULD SAY "DON'T EAT IT." BUT YOU DIDN'T.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU.
WELL... IT'S JUST...
MINAGAWA.
IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE EATING THE CAKE, I'LL HAVE IT FOR YOU.

CLATTER
CLATTER
THIS ONE IS NOT THAT SWEET.
LET'S SWAP.
...BUT YOU ALREADY HAD SOME OF IT...
NEVER MIND. IT WAS JUST ONE BITE.
I SEE...
WHATEVER.
BY THE WAY, WHO *ARE* YOU?

TAP
I ASKED MINAGAWA IF I CAN LIVE IN THIS HOUSE.
RIGHT?
I GO TO THE SAME COLLEGE AS MINAGAWA AND ALSO BELONG TO THE SAME DEPARTMENT.
I'M FUJIMOTO KOUKI.
HUH, ME?
.....
I'm sure there is at least one room available.
This house is big.
SAY YES. YOU HAVE AN EXTRA ROOM, RIGHT?
BUT HE DOESN'T SPEAK MUCH.
WELL, I WANT TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH HIM.
ARE YOU A FRIEND OF YOU-CHAN'S?

I'M TRYING TO GET TO KNOW HIM.
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
YOU'D BETTER ASK YOSHITOMI-SAN. I'M NOT IN CHARGE OF THIS HOUSE.
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO LIVE HERE, TALK TO HIM.
!
BUT DON'T YOU OWN THE HOUSE?
WOULD YOU MIND IF I LIVED HERE?
YOU DECIDE.
YOUICHI
SEEMED TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY,
BUT
HE JUST CLOSED HIS MOUTH.

"YOU'RE SELF-CENTERED AND DISTANCE YOURSELF FROM OTHERS."
I.
RUN THE BOARDING HOUSE IT'S BECAUSE OF MY FATHER.
THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A FEW STUDENTS FROM OUR COLLEGE LIVING IN THIS HOUSE SO I DON'T MIND IF WE HAVE MORE PEOPLE TO LIVE WITH.
"YOU'RE FRIENDLY TO EVERYBODY,
BUT THE TRUTH IS, YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN ANYBODY."
I SEE

WHAAAT!? I'VE ALREADY HAD TWO!
SHOUTA. YOU CAN HAVE MINE, TOO
Huh?
YOU'RE KIDDING!
I DON'T EAT SWEETS
AND YOU HAVEN'T HAD ANY YET!
I'LL TALK TO YOSHITOMI-SAN ABOUT YOU AND GIVE YOU HIS ADDRESS ASK HIM YOURSELF
SO YOU DON'T MIND IF I MOVE IN WHEN WOULD BE A GOOD TIME?
GOOD
IF THAT'S THE CASE
CLACK
I'M LEAVING NOW
ALREADY?
YEAH. I HAVE WORK TOMORROW

BYE, SAKURAI-SAN.
MMM.
SLIDE
SEE YOU.
SHOUTA, HAVE THIS, TOO.
SHOVE
HUH? BUT I'VE HAD ENOUGH
JUST EAT IT
HEY, MINAGAWA. WHO WAS HE?
The guy who left first.
DOESN'T HE LIVE HERE?
SAKURAI-SAN IS.
I'M GOING TO SEE HIM OFF

HUH.
A FRIEND OF YOU-CHAN'S
SAKURAI-SAN!
IT'S DARK AND DAMP. YOU "AIN'T" SEE YOUR FOOTSTEPS
YEAH IT'S CLOSER TO THE STATION
DO YOU ALWAYS COME FROM THE BACKYARD?
RUSTLE

AFTER ALL HE'S NOT INTERESTED IN ANYONE
HE SEEMS TO HAVE SOME FRIENDS AT COLLEGE
IS IT SO UNLIKELY FOR YOUICHI?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
YOUICHI IS ALWAYS LIKE THAT HE LETS EVERYTHING PASS THROUGH HIM.
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THAT GUY ?
BUT SAKURAI-SAN IS
NO WAY I'M NOTHING TO HIM.
I THINK YOUICHI RELIES ON KASHIWAGI-SAN.
OH! THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME OFF
GOOD NIGHT
SAKURAI-SAN.
I CAN TELL YOUICHI LIKES YOU.

I THINK YOUICHI IS TRYING TO TALK OPENLY WITH YOU
IT'S NOT LIKE I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM, BUT
I SEE NO BARRIERS BETWEEN YOU TWO WHEN YOU'RE TALKING TOGETHER
NO DISTANCE
WHAT...?

!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...?
FIRST OF ALL, DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR AGES?
AGE DOESN'T PLAY A ROLE IN BECOMING FRIENDS.
DID YOU REALIZE YOUICHI WAS VERY AWARE OF YOU THE WHOLE TIME TODAY?
YOU'RE RIGHT
YEAH. WELL
OF COURSE
HE'S TALKING ABOUT FRIENDSHIP
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED WITH HIM, BUT

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

SWASH

THUD

FREEZE

CRAWL

RUSTLE
CRUNCH
Hee
Hee
Where did you come from? A shortcut?
W-WHAT HAPPENED, YOU?
I SAID
RUSTLE
WHAT?
I'LL SEE HIM OFF.
YOU CAN GO BACK NOW.

What should I do?
SO
WELL
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
FLINCH
GLANCE
AH.
I'M GOING BACK, SAKURAI-SAN.
I SEE
YOU'VE GOT SOME LEAVES ON YOUR HEAD
WHERE?
HERE
HERE'S ANOTHER ONE
AND HERE

ALL GONE
ALL OF THEM?
YEAH, THEY'RE ALL GONE
!!
SWAP

I'VE BEEN WAN
MOVE BEFORE
Any time I have a chance
HUH?
YOU'D BETTER GO BACK I'M GOING THROUGH THE STATION TO THE OTHER SIDE
WHERE TO?
WHAT AM
WELL IT'S ABOUT 10 MINUTES
From here
OF COURSE
TO MY HOUSE
MY APARTMENT
IS IT FAR FROM HERE?

CAN I COME WITH YOU?
HEY, DO YOU KNOW WHERE MINAGAWA WENT?
I DON'T KNOW
BY THE WAY,
YOU CALL HIM MINAGAWA, BUT IT'S ANNOYING I'M ALSO MINAGAWA.
THE SAME FAMILY NAME?

I'M MINAGAWA SHOUTA!
WE'RE COUSINS.
I SEE, YOU'RE COUSINS
THEN IS THAT COOL GUY RELATED, TOO?
TAKE-SAN IS OUR COUSIN, TOO! HE'S IWASAKI TAKEO
THAT'S NEWS TO ME THAT YOU'RE ALL RELATED!
HOW ABOUT SAKURAI?
HE IS A GOOD FRIEND OF YOU-CHAN'S!
DO YOU LIVE
IN YOUR PARENTS HOUSE? OTHERWISE YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO MOVE IN SO QUICKLY
WE..L
YEAH.
SO. IF YOU LIVE WITH THEM. WHAT'S THE POINT OR NEED IN LIVING IN A BOARDING HOUSE?
BECAUSE IT'S CLOSER TO YOUR COLLEGE, RIGHT?

BUT IT DOESN'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE THIS HOUSE
YOU TWO ARE NOT CLOSE FRIENDS, RIGHT?
WELL
IT IS CONVENIENT TO MY COLLEGE
BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON I'M THRILLED TO BE FRIENDS WITH MINAGAWA
I TRIED TO TALK TO HIM, BUT HE ALWAYS IGNORES ME
HE KEEPS ALOOF FROM OTHERS I CAN'T TELL WHAT HE'S REALLY THINKING ABOUT
TAP
I ASKED MY FRIENDS WHAT HE'S LIKE, BUT NOBODY KNOWS HIM WELL
I GOT QUITE CURIOUS AND CAN'T STOP MYSELF FROM STARING AT HIM
YOU KNOW,

WHAT HE DOES, WHERE HE LIVES, AND WHAT HIS LIFE IS LIKE. I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING
WHEN I HAVE A CRUSH ON SOMEONE I WANT TO DIG UP EVERYTHING ABOUT THE PERSON
IT'S BETTER TO MAKE A MOVE RIGHT AWAY WHEN YOU FALL IN LOVE OR YOUR PASSION DISSOLVES INTO NOTHING, RIGHT?
I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT KIND OF PLACE YOU LIVE IN
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME
WHAT MOVE?
IS SOMETHING WRONG?

YES OR NO?
YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T LIKE ME.
YOU ALWAYS LOOKED LIKE YOU HAD NO INTEREST IN OTHERS
BUT LOOK AT YOU NOW
YOU'RE CHASING ME LIKE CRAZY
"I THINK YOUICHI LIKES YOU."

HE LIKES HIS WORK
SO HE JUST MAY
HEY
I'M LATE CAN I SLEEP HERE TONIGHT?
I DON'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR SCHOOL TOMORROW
I live in Yokohama, but it's a bit of a hassle to go to college from there
HUH?
ASK SOME-ONE ELSE!
YES
LET'S GO

TBC!

Hidaka Shoko

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vol 2

release date: 01/16/11 nakamanga.com

第8話

WHEN YUICHI WAS BORN WAS EIGHTEEN OR NINETEEN
WHAT WAS I DOING THEN?
I REMEMBER I WAS ALWAYS BUSY WITH SMALL ASSIGNMENTS AND PART TIME JOBS
I DON'T KNOW WHAT STUDENTS NOWADAYS ARE INTERESTED IN
I ENDED UP DOING SOME RESEARCH ON THEM
HE'S A STUDENT AT AN ART COLLEGE SO I MUST BE SAFE TO TALK ABOUT ART
mumble
mumble
HE SEEMED TO BE HAPPY TALKING WITH KASHIMA SAN SO MAYBE WE CAN FIND SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT AS WELL
GLANCE
A MEMORY OF HIS FATHER COMING UP BETWEEN THEM ALL THE TIME
YET WHEN I TALK TO HIM HE VERY ABLY REMEMBERS THE PAST

THUD

THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING OF INTEREST, I'M AFRAID
YEAH, SO?
DO YOU LIVE HERE ALONE?
CLICK

DZZ
DZZ
DZZ
RING
RING
SLIDE
WHAT!?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

Are you a kid!?
ARE YOU STUPID? STOP PLAYING WITH THE PHONE!
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW THE NUMBER TO OPEN THE DOOR FOR THE NEXT TIME
I'LL TELL YOU LATER!
NEXT TIME?
BEEP
YES?
I'M SORRY, WRONG NUMBER!

FIFTH!
TOP FLOOR!
WHICH FLOOR?
AFTER YOU.
DING
I HAVE NO CLUE
WHAT MADE HIM COME HERE
"I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT KIND OF PLACE YOU LIVE IN."
SILENCE
WHIRR
I DON'T THINK HE HAS ANY PARTICULAR REASON TO COME HERE
CLICK
COME IN.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I WISH
IT'S HOPELESS.

IT'S SMALL.
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME ON THE COUCH
LET'S HAVE SOMETHING TO DRINK
FLOP
FAIR ENOUGH
IT'S A RABBIT HUTCH COMPARED TO YOUR PLACE
WHAT SHOULD WE TALK ABOUT?
Few houses are bigger than yours.
"I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT."

"I RUN THE BOARDING HOUSE IT'S BECAUSE OF MY FATHER"
"IT'S AS IF HE'S FOLLOWING IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS"
FLIP
"HE IS NOT ORDINARY IS HE?"
CLACK
JINGLE
"I'M AFRAID"
CLICK
grind
grind
grind
"MAY HAVE NARROWED HIS POSSIBILITIES"
grind
grind
"EVERYBODY AROUND HIM"
WHAT WAS HIS FATHER LIKE?
IT SMELLS GOOD

CLACK
CLACK
HOW ABOUT YOU?
TAKE-SAN DRINKS COFFEE SOMETIMES
UH . YEAH
YOU GRIND BEANS EVERY TIME YOU DRINK?
URK!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
GLUB
I DO,
BUT I DON'T DRINK MUCH.
GLUB
GLUB
YOU DON'T?
I LIKE HIS BLUNT WAY OF SPEAKING THEN, BUT, NOW
I FEEL EASY BEING WITH HIM,
AND

WAH!
SAKURAI-SAN?
BLUSH
I'M THINKING IT'S GENEROUS OF HIM TO TRY TO DRINK THE COFFEE I MAKE
I'LL BRING THE COFFEE
G-GO OVER THERE
I DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY HE STARED AT ME EITHER, BUT
What should I do ?
STILL NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT
SIP
THANK YOU
HERE YOU GO.

OH
FWIP
bzz
bzz
bzz
CLICK
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
Nothing amusing
DO YOU WATCH TV VERY OFTEN?
I USUALLY GET HOME QUITE LATE
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME TO WATCH TV ANYWAY
I WORK FOR AN AD AGENCY, SO I TURN IT ON
TO CHECK COMMERCIALS OR POPULAR TALENTS.
beep
beep
WELL.

Huh?
I'M HAVING FUN.
THIS IS NOT MUCH FUN, I'M AFRAID.
SAKURAI-SAN IS INTER-ESTING AND FUN TO BE WITH
YOU'RE A GROWN-UP, BUT SOMETIMES YOU GET EASILY EXCITED
LIKE A KID
SIP
IS THAT WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU'RE TOO MATURE
YOU ALWAYS WEAR A COMPOSED FACE.
YOUR FRIEND WAS ENERGETIC, THOUGH.
FUJI-MOTO?
YEAH, FUJIMOTO-KUN. IS HE GOING TO LIVE THERE?

ARE YOU GETTING ALONG WELL WITH TAKE-SAN?
THAT HE LIKES YOU.
BUT IT WAS CRYSTAL CLEAR...
. I DON'T KNOW
WE'RE IN THE SAME DEPARTMENT AT COLLEGE.
BUT I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM.
HUH?
WHAT MADE YOU THINK SO?
Take-san?
HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO SEE YOU OFF
I THOUGHT, TAKE-SAN KNEW WHERE YOU LIVED.
AND..

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS CHASING AFTER YOU.
I WANTED TO BE WITH YOU FOR A WHILE LONGER.

I'M HAPPY TO HEAR THAT
BUT
"AGE DOESN'T PLAY A ROLE IN BECOMING FRIENDS"
I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD BE HONEST
WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW ?
SAKURAI-SAN?
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS .. ?
IT'S EASY TO READ WOMEN'S MINDS, BUT
HUH?
CREAK

HOW OLD ARE YOU?
I SEE
?
I'M NINETEEN.

RUFFLE
PINCH
!
WHAT!?
Hana.
JOLT
DO YOU WANT SOME-THING TO EAT,
YOUICHI?
!

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME
YOU'VE CALLED ME BY MY FIRST NAME

Hidaka Shoko

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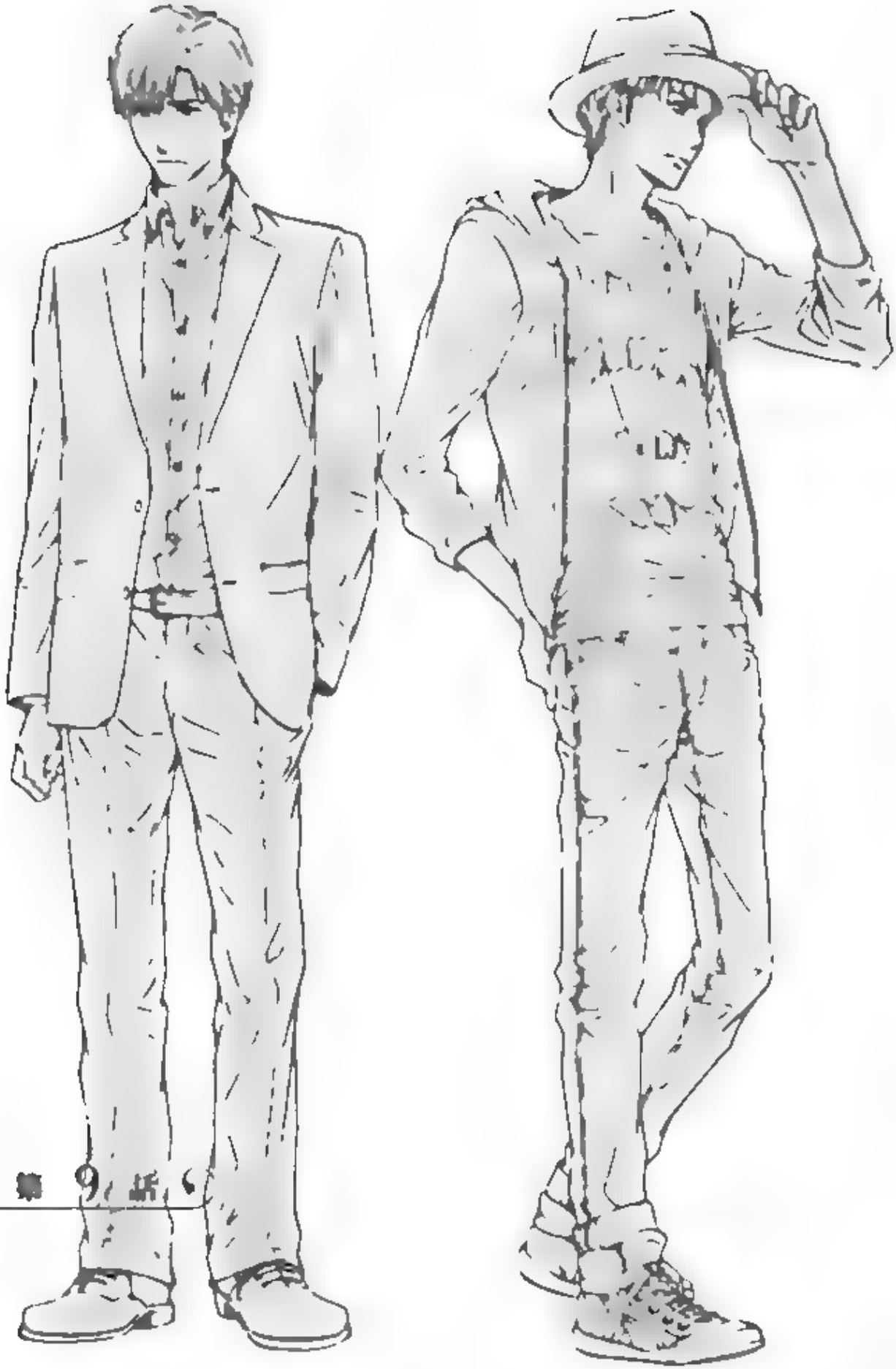
editor: aripie
qcer: aripie

vol 2

release date: 06/19/11 nakamanga.com



ZONE OUT
"THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE CALLED ME BY MY FIRST NAME."
frozen dumplings
DINNER TIME
frozen pilaf

I'M ALREADY FULL THANK YOU.
HUH?
RATTLE
THANK YOU, BUT I'M GOING HOME
WHAT'S WITH YOUR EXPRESSION?
I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD GO OUT TO EAT
IT WAS YOU WHO SAID NO
Hmph.
SEE YOU.
I DON'T LIKE FROZEN FOOD.
You haven't eaten anything
What do you mean?
HEY.
BLUNT
THANKS FOR INVITING ME.
IRRITATED

SAKURAI-SAN
SAKURAI-SAN!
EVEN THOUGH.
Touched him—
HAVE I DONE SOMETHING ..EWD?
COME TO THINK OF IT HE WAS JUST LIKE THAT FROM THE BEGINNING.
WHY ON EARTH DO I HAVE TO RECEIVE HIS ATTITUDE WHEN I TREATED HIM SO GENEROUSLY ?
YOU WERE NAPPING, WEREN'T YOU?
WHAT'S WITH YOU?
OH, SORRY
WHAT'S UP?
I DON'T THINK HE SHINES ON SCREEN.
YOU SURE? HOW ABOUT NUMBER 9...?
NUMBER 2 IS NOT THAT BAD
COOL AS A SOFT DRINK.
RIGHT
Mmm.
..OOK AT THE BOSS. HE DOESN'T ..OOK TOO HAPPY
YES, YOU WERE IT'S NUMBER 9 AND 10
NO, I WAS NOT
IT'S. NUMBER 5, RIGHT?
NO ONE PROMISING SO FAR.

RIGHT IT'S FOR THE COMMERCIAL WE USED A CELEBRITY FOR UNTIL NOW
EXCUSE ME
THEY ARE ALL FROM MODELING AGENCIES, BUT MANY OF THEM ARE NOT VERY EXPERIENCED, SO WE'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL
WHAT A BOTHER. WE'VE STILL GOT THIS MANY APPLICANTS.
HOW MANY LEFT?
FLIP
INOUE, HOW OLD ARE YOU?
HUH? WELL.. NINETEEN AND THE RIGHT IS SEVEN-TEEN.
SO. HOW OLD ARE THEY?
OH, YEAH.
HUH? I'M TWENTY EIGHT. V
SAY DO YOU THINK YOU'D GO OUT WITH SOMEONE WHO'S NINETEEN?

NEXT,
NUMBER 17 AND 18.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW IF THE GIRL IS A STUDENT.
I DON'T THINK WE'D HAVE MUCH TO TALK ABOUT
IT WOULDN'T LAST
WITH A TEENAGER. .
No, never
EXCUSE ME
CLICK
HUH?
NUMBER 18
LOOK! HE LOOKS NICE
...YOU!
IT'S YOU!!

Sorry for the fuss
SO., SAKURAI, YOU KNOW HIM, RIGHT?
WAA!
JUMP
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WORK FOR THAT COMPANY
WELL. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
BUT YEAH, IF YOU SAY SO
YOU KNOW KASHIWAGI MASAFUMI FROM CHUOU AD AGENCY AND HAVE GOTTEN TO KNOW MINAGAWA TOO, RIGHT?
Here
Thank you.

I WENT ON SOME AUDITIONS BUT HAVEN'T PASSED ONE YET
I'M JUST CURIOUS TO KNOW THE WORKPLACES OF CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENT
It has nothing to do with your major
YEAH? BUT
YOU MAJOR IN OIL PAINTING LIKE YOUICHI?
I WAS SPOTTED IN TOWN AND JOINED THE AGENCY
I DON'T WORK THAT MUCH
HOW ABOUT YOU? YOU DIDN'T SAY YOU DO MODELING
YOU'RE TALL SO THAT EXPLAINS ENOUGH, THOUGH
CAN I HAVE YOUR BUSINESS CARD?
OH, I SEE., SOUNDS FAMILIAR
YEAH
AND I WAS INTERESTED IN THE ADVERTISING BUSINESS IN THE FIRST PLACE
YEAH. IT WASN'T TOO LONG AFTER I ENTERED THE COLLEGE THAT I HIT MY HEAD ON THE CEILING OF MY TALENT

!
THANK YOU
SAKURAI KAZUAKI-
SAN.
GOT IT
AN ART DIRECTOR IN THE THIRD DEPARTMENT OF ADEAST AGENCY THAT'S SOME BUSINESS TITLE
SO.
FUJIMOTO-KUN? ARE YOU GOING TO LIVE IN THAT HOUSE?
YES, MAYBE STARTING NEXT WEEK.
HUH?
HOW DID SOMEONE LIKE YOU BECOME FRIENDS WITH MINAGAWA?
SHOUTA SAID MINAGAWA AND YOU ARE FRIENDS, BUT I THINK IT'S HIGHLY UNLIKELY
IT SEEMS MINAGAWA IS INDIFFERENT TO EVERYTHING, SO YOU TWO MIGHT NOT HAVE MUCH TO TALK ABOUT TO BEGIN WITH, YOU'RE A LOT OLDER THAN HIM.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

I'M TRYING TO SAY. .
I GUESS YOU AND I ARE AFTER THE SAME PERSON.
SAME?
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS ALWAYS LOOKING AT HIM IN SCHOOL.
HE'S SO MYSTERIOUS THAT I WAS THRILLED TO FIND OUT EVERY-THING.
WHAT HIS VOICE IS LIKE, THE WAY HE SPEAKS, WHAT HIS LIFE IS LIKE,
AND WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION HE'LL WEAR ON HIS FACE IF I TOUCH HIM.
I. HAVE NEVER SWUNG THAT WAY

IT'S OBVIOUS FROM THE WAY YOU LOOK AT HIM.
SAME WITH YOU, RIGHT, SAKURAI-SAN?
OF COURSE, I HOPE I'M JUST MIS-READING IT.
AH.
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

THAT GUY FUJIMOTO
WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A SHORT TIME. WHY DO I HAVE TO BE BOTHERED. ?
CREAK
YOU HAD A FEW CALLS. .
AND WILL YOU CHECK THIS OUT?
YEAH, OKAY
"I WAS ALWAYS LOOKING AT HIM. "
"WHAT HIS VOICE IS LIKE. WHAT EXPRESSION HE'LL WEAR ON HIS FACE IF I TOUCH HIM."
"SAME WITH YOU, RIGHT?"
"I HOPE

"...I'M JUST MISREADING IT."
JUMP!
THUNK THUNK
WAS I STARING AT HIM...?
AM I THAT OBVIOUS? SINCE WHEN?
HE'S A MAN.
RUSTLE
AND ONLY NINETEEN.

NOBODY'S HOME.

I'M YOSHI-TOMI, THE CARETAKER.
MOVE
HUH?
OH. ?
He's DIB!
CLUNK
CLUNK
WHO DID YOU WANT TO SEE?
THEY WON'T BE BACK SOON. THEY HAVE PART-TIME JOBS AND CLUB ACTIVITIES TONIGHT
I.
I WANTED TO SEE MINAGAWA YOUICHI-KUN.
YOU WANTED TO SEE YOUICHI? HE WENT TO THE HEAD FAMILY'S HOUSE
HEAD FAMILY?
HE SAID HE NEEDED SOME PAPERS SO THAT SHOUTA COULD APPLY TO A UNIVERSITY
HE'LL BE BACK BEFORE LONG
SO. I TAKE IT YOU ARE "SAKURAI-SAN"?

YOU'RE A TERRIBLE COOK
HUH? Y-YES
YOUICHI TOLD ME
COME ON IN
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TALK WITH YOU
WHAT KIND OF JOB DID YOU DO TODAY?

HOW ON EARTH CAN YOU BE SO STINKY? IT'S NOT ONLY SWEAT BUT ALSO SOME CHEMICAL ODOR
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
I CAN'T BEAR IT
Stay away!
REEK
LET'S DROP BY THE PUBLIC BATH ACROSS THE STREET
YOU'RE TOO FUSSY ABOUT BEING CLEAN
YOU-CHAN SAID YOU WEAR A MASK WHEN YOU RIDE ON THE TRAIN.
SERIOUSLY?
I'M JUST PLAIN NORMAL
SHUT UP
YOU HAVE A STRONG SCENT LIKE A DOG
YOU'D BETTER CUT DOWN ON THE TIME YOU SPEND WORKING
Do I smell that bad?
SNIFF

YOU SHOULD.
NO.
I DON'T WANT TO I WANT TO LIVE ON MY OWN SOONER
NO
WHY?
YOU'VE GOT TO STUDY FOR THE ENTRANCE EXAMS.
Because I stink of sweat?
hehe
haha
. I TOLD YOU I'M NOT GOING TO COLLEGE
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
YOU SHOULD KEEP LIVING THERE AT IZUMISAWA.
YOU'LL MOVE OUT IN TIME
WE CAN'T LIVE THERE FOREVER
I DON'T WANT TO LIVE UNDER SUCH UNSTABLE CONDITIONS.
YOU-CHAN IS EASILY SWAYED, SO I CAN'T COUNT ON HIM.

what's he thinking?
Impudent
WHO?
FUJIMOTO?
YES
STARTING NEXT WEEK THAT GUY IS GOING TO LIVE WITH US
GEEZ!!
He's talking with the head family right now.
SPEAKING OF YOUICHI, DON'T YOU THINK HE'S CHANGED OVERNIGHT?
I'M POSITIVE THAT GUY IS UP TO SOMETHING HE SAID HE LIKES YOU-CHAN.
YOU-CHAN MUST HAVE SAID YES BEFORE THINKING IT OVER.
NO, I DON'T.
YOU DON'T LIKE HIM?
AN ASH-TRAY
AND
HERE YOU GO. TEA.

PHEW.
Thanks
CREAK
THANK YOU.
SOME BOILED AND BAKED POTATOES ARE IN THE KITCHEN, IF YOU WANT THEM.
sip
click
YOSHITOMI-SAN HAS BEEN TAKING CARE OF US FOR TOO LONG! EVERYTHING HE MAKES IS BOILED OR STEAMED!
Shouta
I THOUGHT IT WAS A SHE
AH! WELL...
IT'S JUST YOU'RE A BIT DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I'VE IMAGINED.
WHAT IS IT?
FUJI-MOTO.
Huh.
THAT GUY, FUJIMOTO, SAID MY ATTITUDE IS BAD.
NO, YOU LOOK YOUNGER THAN I THOUGHT
YOU MEAN I'M VULGAR?

I HEARD YOUICHI VISITED YOUR APARTMENT,
SO HE MET FUJIMOTO I GUESS HE REALLY IS GOING TO MOVE IN HERE.
IT WAS. JUST.
I WAS NOT EXPECTING HIM TO COME.
...!
CHOKE
AND WAS ABOUT TO EAT YOUR AWFUL DINNER
SO,
WHAT DID YOU TWO TALK ABOUT?
HUH?
THAT'S BECAUSE.
THEN WHY DID HE COME TO SEE YOU?
WELL. NOTHING ESPECIALLY
HE'S MUCH YOUNGER THAN I AM, SO IT'S HARD TO FIND SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

CLICK
WHEN HE—
YOUICHI—
DIG
DIG
IT'S NOTHING..
WHY ARE YOU BLUSHING?
Huh?
WAS SMALL, HIS PARENTS DIED SUDDENLY
AND AFTER THAT,
THE HEAD FAMILY?
WITH SHOUTA?
HE AND SHOUTA LIVED WITH THE HEAD FAMILY

TAP
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ANY OF THAT?
THE MINAGAWA IS A FAMILY OF PEDIGREE AND FORTUNE
NATURALLY, THERE ARE MANY RELATIVES
YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW BOTHERSOME IT CAN BE
I THINK YOUICHI WAS NOT COMFORTABLE LIVING IN SUCH A PLACE
WHEN HE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, HE MOVED BACK HERE
SHOUTA JOINED HIM SHORTLY,
BUT THEY WERE TOO YOUNG TO LIVE BY THEMSELVES.
SINCE I, ONE OF HIS RELATIVES, AND MASAFUMI LIVED HERE FOR SO LONG, WE TALKED THE FAMILY INTO ALLOWING THEM TO LIVE HERE UNDER OUR CARE.
MY FAMILY RAN A REAL ESTATE AGENCY AND HAD BEEN IN BUSINESS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

KATSURAGI. KATSURAGI MASAFUMI YOU WORK WITH HIM, RIGHT?
Youichi told me so
OH!
IS HE HIS FRIEND OR?
BY THE WAY, WHO'S MASAFUMI?
REAL ESTATE AGENT
SO HE LOOKS AFTER THE HOUSE
. MASAFUMI AND I WERE FRIENDS OF HIS FATHER.
I WAS REALLY HAPPY WHEN YOUICHI DECIDED TO LIVE HERE AGAIN.
HERE'S ANOTHER ONE WHO TALKS ABOUT HIS FATHER.
EVERYONE AROUND HIM ENCOURAGED HIM TO DRAW PICTURES, AND HE DID WHAT HE WAS TOLD
I WAS REALLY HAPPY, BUT. .

"WHY NOT GO OUT TO EAT WITH TAKEO AND SHOUTA?"
"I DON'T WANT TO."
"LOOK AT THEM. WITH FRIENDS OR A GIRLFRIEND."
"HEY, YOUICHI."
"YOU ARE NOT OBLIGED TO HAVE DINNER AT HOME EVERY TIME I COME TO MAKE IT."
HE WENT TO THE SAME ART COLLEGE AS HIS FATHER.
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM GO WILD
I'M AFRAID HE'S BEEN OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT PLEASING OTHERS LONG SINCE HE WAS A CHILD
HE'S YOUNG, ONLY NINETEEN.
"I'M NOT INTERESTED."
"I'M MORE RELAXED WHEN I'M WITH YOU OR KATSURAGI SAN."

HE MUST HAVE HAD SOMETHING HE WANTED TO PURSUE.
IN MY OPINION.
BOTH OF THEM BLAME THEMSELVES FOR WHAT THEY'VE DONE
BUT I
"I THINK HE IS LACKING SOMETHING, BUT I CAN'T TELL WHAT IT IS.
THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM MAY HAVE LAID A HEAVY BURDEN ON HIM."
NOT ONLY KATSURAGI-SAN, BUT YOSHITOMI-SAN TOO. WORRY OVER THE SAME CONCERN.
HE. YOUICHI.
I'M A THIRD PARTY TO THIS, BUT..

WHENEVER I SEE HIM DRAWING,
HE LOVES DRAWING PICTURES
DRAWS PICTURES BECAUSE HE LIKES IT
IT'S ALL OVER ON HIS FACE
HE LOOKS GENUINELY HAPPY
INDEED, HE'S NOT FRIENDLY AND MAY LOOK UNSOCIABLE, BUT .
HE LIKES YOUR DISHES SO MUCH THAT HE COULDN'T MANAGE TO EAT THE FROZEN FOOD I SERVED AND LEFT ME STUNNED THAT DAY
IT'S NOT BECAUSE HE FEELS SORRY FOR YOU.
I BET HE REALLY LIKES YOUR DISHES

AN HONEST PURE-HEARTED YOUNG MAN
YOUICHI IS
AH!
STARE

YOU STAY ON WEEKENDS
I'LL GIVE YOU A BARGAIN AND LET YOU RENT MORE CHEAPLY THAN FUJIMOTO
AND TAKE CARE OF THE FLOWERS...
Like a second home
CREAK

BUT I'M NOT
I SHOULD LIVE IN THERE
HE CASUALLY SAYS.
IT'S TOO MUCH OF A BOTHER TO LIVE WITH YOUNGSTERS
I PREFER TO LIVE ALONE.
IT'S NOT
I'M NOT HIS FRIEND
Roll
I CAN'T BE HIS GUARDIAN.
KASHIWAGI-SAN AND YOSHITOMI-SAN HAVE MISUNDER-STOOD.

" WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION
WILL HE WEAR ON HIS FACE IF I TOUCH HIM?"
WHAT I WANT TO DO WITH HIM.
"I WANT TO TOUCH HIM."
WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION...
AM I DYING TO DRAW OUT OF HIM?

THE MORE I REALIZE MY FEELINGS
THE DEEPER I'M IN
WHAT'S WITH ME
SWITCH
I DIDN'T THINK I'D BE ...RED BY A MAN
YOUICHI...
YOU LOOK TIRED YOU DIDN'T SLEEP WELL?
WELL NO, I DIDN'T
WOBBLE
EVEN THOUGH YOU FINISHED UP EARLIER THAN USUAL!?
TOO MANY THINGS TO THINK ABOUT
UHH?
CHATTER
CHATTER

IS THE RUMOR TRUE THAT YOU'LL BE TRANSFERRED?
SAKURAI-SAN...
OH, I'M RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT
Phew!
NEVER HEARD IT
IT'S A GROUND-LESS RUMOR!
HUH? TRANSFER-RED?
THE RUMOR SAYS YOU'LL BE MOVED TO THE KANSAI BRANCH.
Maybe someone else accepted the offer
BUT THAT WAS IT
You bet
IT'S A FAST TRACK
EVERYONE IS MORE THAN HAPPY TO ACCEPT IT
WHAT IS IT?
I
REMEMBER
LAST YEAR, THE BOSS CAME TO ME AND GAVE A HINT OF MY TRANSFER
LAST YEAR!?

YEAH, I THOUGHT YOU JUST ROUTINELY MANAGED TO DO THE JOB.
I WAS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT WHERE I WORKED.
NOD
NOD
YOU WEREN'T INTO YOUR WORK AT ALL
BESIDES,
THERE WAS NOTHING TO STOP ME FROM MOVING LAST YEAR, BUT NOW I DON'T WANT TO
LAST YEAR,
BUT YOU'VE CHANGED LATELY
YOU DON'T WANT TO MOVE BECAUSE YOU WORK SMOOTHLY WITH YOUR CLIENTS NOW, RIGHT?
AH!
SERI-OUSLY?
You flatter-er!
I'M SURE WE CAN AIM FOR AN AWARD WITH THE WORK WE'RE DOING TOGETHER
I'M HAPPY AS LONG AS I CAN WORK WITH YOU!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'm not thrilled to change the environment around me
.WELL,
I SIMPLY DON'T WANT TO MOVE NOW

NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
ALL RIGHT
That's number 18
SORRY INOUE, I'LL CATCH UP
It won't be long
I BELIEVE I'VE PASSED IT ON MY OWN. NOT BECAUSE OF YOUR HELP
SO.
SINCE YOU'RE HERE, I ASSUME YOU PASSED THE AUDITION

I DON'T WANT TO OWE YOU ANYTHING
THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR
I only helped you get the audition
I'M NOT EVEN A MEMBER OF THAT PROJECT
YOU'RE RIGHT
HAVE I EVER BEEN RUDE TO YOU?
. FUJIMOTO-KUN?
YOU SPEAK AS IF YOU'RE TRYING TO PICK A QUARREL WITH ME
BECAUSE MINAGAWA CARES ABOUT YOU AND IT'S OBVIOUS.

SAKU-RAI-SAN.
DO YOU THINK HE SWINGS THAT WAY?
I SUSPECTED HE MIGHT
WHEN I SAW HIM FIX HIS EYES ON YOU.
YOU'RE A MAN OF HIGH STATUS AND WAY AHEAD OF US
SOME-THING LIKE THIS
COULD CAUSE YOU TROUBLE MAYBE EVEN BE FATAL TO YOUR CAREER.

DING
OH!
I'M GOING SEE YOU.
—OFF HIM.
WHAT?
I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.

MY EYES
ALWAYS CHASE AFTER HIM.
I'M INTRIGUED TO KNOW WHAT'S IN HIS MIND AND I WANT TO BE WITH HIM FOREVER . .
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?
YOU ASKED ME THE OTHER DAY
ABOUT YOUICHI

REALLY—
AND I'M
GOING TO MOVE INTO THAT HOUSE.
IT'S NOT THAT
...YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG.

WHAT?
IS SAKURAI-SAN JOINING US?
YES.
I WAS NOT REALLY EXPECTING HE'D ACCEPT MY OFFER.
BUT HE'LL STAY ONLY ON WEEK-ENDS
I'LL LET HIM STAY IN THE EIGHT-TATAMI MAT ROOM.
SHAAA
CLINK
CLINK
The one facing south
HOW ABOUT THE ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR? IT'S TIDY
FUJI-MOTO IS GOING TO MOVE IN THERE.
Towe!
Towe!
GEEZ!
IS HE REALLY COMING?
Hi

Yum Yum
NO-THING.
I WAS THINKING THAT SAKURAI-SAN DOESN'T LIKE ME
WHAT' WRONG?
With you?
OH.
HUH?
GOOD FOR YOU.
THEN HE'S OKAY WITH YOU.
Soy-suuce, soy suuce
Thanks
SLOSH
YOU DON'T LIKE HIM?
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE HIM.
I don't know
BUT...

FINISH UP!
AS IF YOU KNOW EVERY-THING
You fall in love, and the next moment you're already disgusted It happens all the time
HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS ARE NOT THAT SIMPLE
I'VE GOT TO DO THE DISHES.
And prepare for the next meal.

YOU NEED A HELPING HAND?
Is this for the presentation?
I'm so sorry
This will be ready soon
SORRY. IT'LL BE FINISHED SOON.
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
YOU HAVEN'T FINISHED ANYTHING
SAKURAI. WHAT'S WITH YOU TODAY?
BOSS

TBC!

Hidaka Shoko

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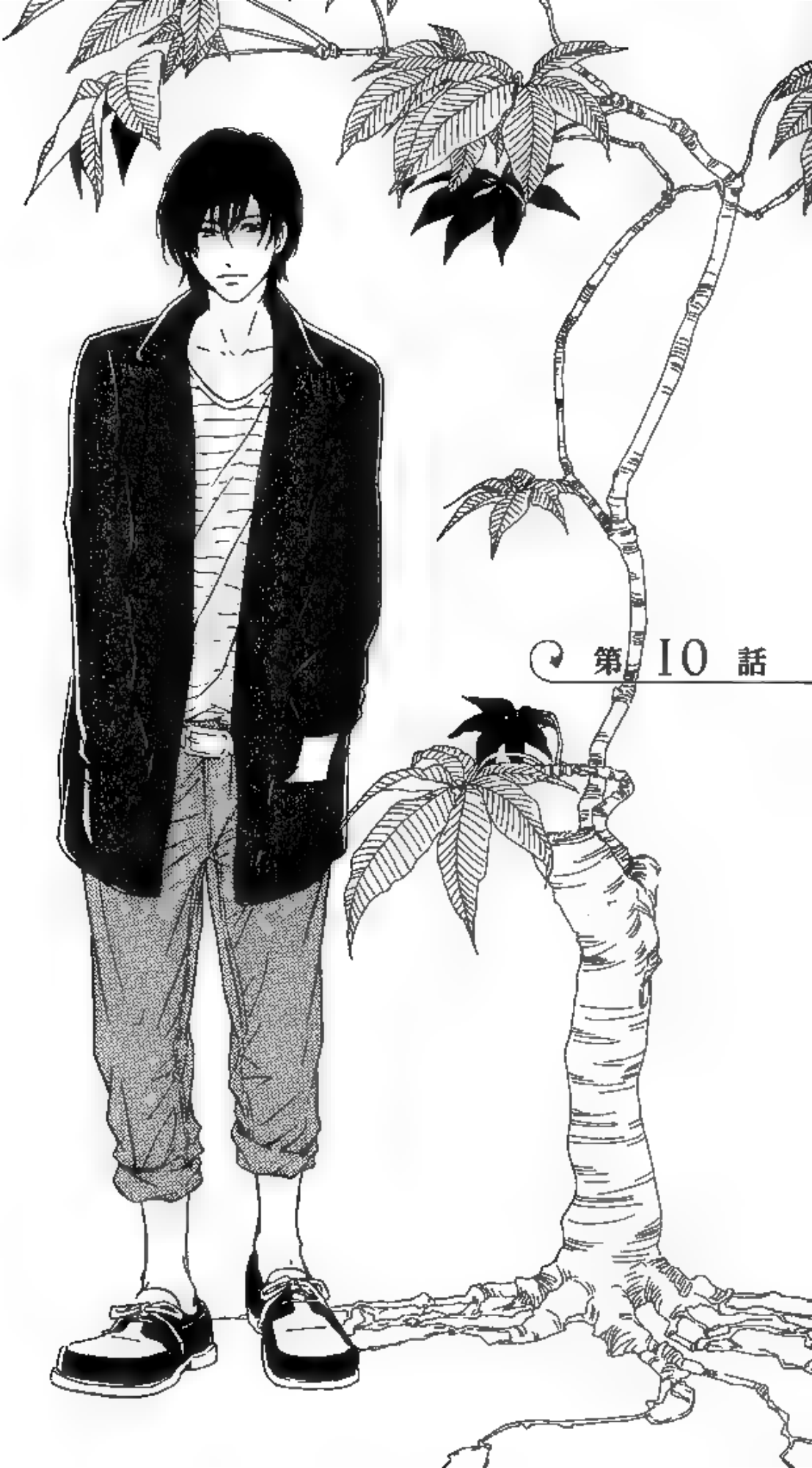
vol 2

release date: 10/23/11 nakamanga.com



第10話

HE JUST ASKED ME OUT OF THE BLUE IF HE COULD LIVE IN A BOARDING HOUSE
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR LETTING MY SON MOVE IN.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT THE CARE-TAKER COMES EVERY DAY
I'M GLAD I COULD HELP YOU OUT

!
BY THE WAY, I HEARD YOU WERE A MANAGER AT THE CHUO AD AGENCY
I LIVED HERE TOO WHEN I WAS IN COLLEGE
IT'S QUITE CLOSE TO THE CAMPUS HE'LL BE ABLE TO STUDY HARD AND GET MORE THINGS DONE
BUT YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO WORK THERE!
MOM, THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MY MOVING IN
Shut up. Easier said than done!
BUZZZ
So what?
WELL, WELL
Quit it!
WAVE
HI. WAVE
Hmph!
SHOUTA.
OH, MAN
Geez!

I'm the only one who pays rent.
THIS PLACE WAS ORIGINALLY A BOARDING HOUSE
WE HAVE NEW FACES AFTER SO LONG.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
QUIT FOOLING AROUND AND HELP ME!
NEVER!
LOOK AT HIS HAPPY FACE
NOBODY WANTS YOU HERE . .
NO-BODY!
BOTH OF YOU ARE HOPELESS.
HEY, YOUICHI, YOU TOO
ENOUGH SPACING OUT HELP ME
HUH?
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
san?

DID YOU HEAR FROM SAKURAI-SAN?
HUH?
HEAR FROM HIM?
GLANCE
WELL,
I HEARD YOSHITOMI-SAN HAD A CALL FROM HIM.
WHEN?
I DON'T KNOW
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHEN HE'S COMING, ASK SHOUTA FOR SAKURAI-SAN'S MOBILE PHONE NUMBER
YOU DON'T HAVE IT, RIGHT?
WHY DOES SHOUTA KNOW HIS NUMBER?
I'M SAYING IF YOU WANT TO KNOW, JUST ASK HIM

WHY SHOULD I? I DON'T CARE IF HE COMES OR NOT
YOU LIAR.
. YOUICHI.
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY OR DO, YOU'VE GOT TO EXPRESS IT IN WORDS.
KASHIWAGI-SAN AND YOSHITOMI-SAN KNOW YOU WELL AND SPOIL YOU, BUT
YOU SHOULD TELL SAKURAI-SAN EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE THINKING
YOU WON'T GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE UNLESS YOU SAY WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY

I KNOW
I'VE NEVER HELD BACK WHEN IT COMES TO SAKURAI-SAN.
NOT ONCE
What's inside?
CLATTER
I'M TELLING YOU THAT YOU NEED TO TAKE A STEP FORWARD AND. .
AH.
HUH?
RUSTLE

?
WHAT
IS KASHIWAGI-SAN DOING?
THAT'S FUJIMOTO
HE'S ALREADY MOVED IN.
I WANTED TO MOVE IN BEFORE FUJIMOTO SO I WAS PLANNING TO COME ON SATURDAY BUT

I WORKED OVERNIGHT AND FINALLY HERE I AM.
WORN OUT
NO WAY!
SAKU-RA!!
THE CLIENT REQUESTED A CHANGE IN SCHEDULE, SO WE'RE SHOOTING TOMORROW
Schedule it: I'm counting on you
We meet at 6 pm!
Shooting ends at 1 am!
It's Saturday tomorrow!
I WONDER IF YOSHITOMI-SAN TOLD KASHIWAGI-SAN ABOUT MY MOVING IN.
RUSTLE
KASHIWAGI-SAN SAID HE FREQUENTS THIS PLACE
AND YOSHITOMI-SAN MIGHT
I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT TWICE BEFORE I SAID THAT
CRUNCH
KASHIWAGI-SAN ASKED ME TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOUICH..
BUT I REPLIED I WAS NOT THAT CLOSE TO YOUICH AND

WHEN I TALKED WITH YOSH TOMI-SAN, I MADE UP MY MIND FAST BUT
I SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS
FWAP
I SUSPECT SOMETHING S GOING ON BETWEEN US
WE DON'T LOOK LIKE FRIENDS

I SHOULD BE TURNING BACK
NOW'S THE TIME TO CHANGE MY MIND, IF I'M GOING TO
FLUTTER
FLUTTER

WHOOSH
AH.
SAKURAI-SAN.

I SHOULD BE TURNING BACK.
I SAID IT MYSELF. YET ...
YOU'RE LATE.
I THOUGHT YOU'D COME YESTERDAY
IT'S NOW OR NEVER.

Laughing?
I CAN'T FIGURE OUT...
I CAN'T
YOU MAKE ME FEEL SO HAPPY

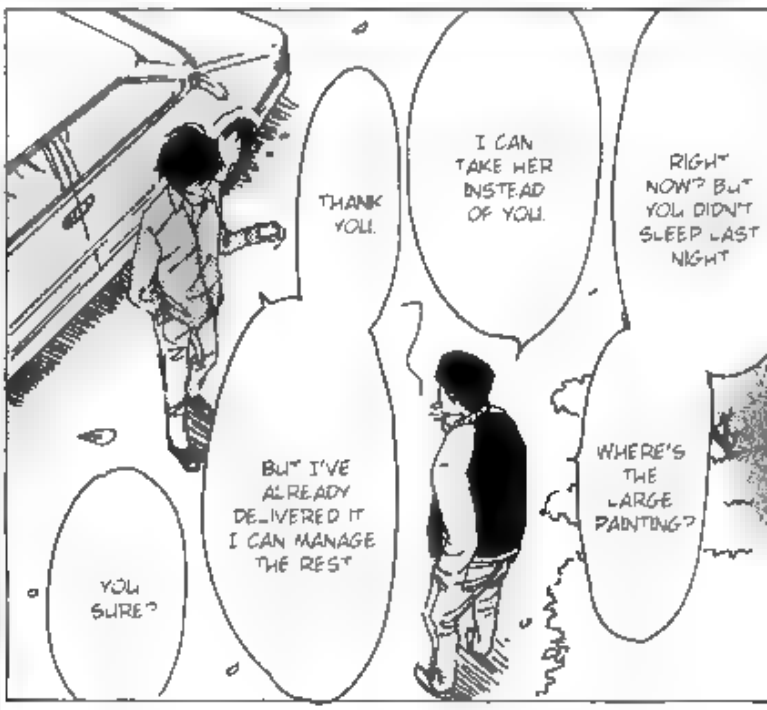
GIVE ME A BREAK!
YOU STILL EXPECT ME TO COME RUNNING AFTER SO MANY YEARS, AS LONG AS YOU MAKE ME DINNER?
...WHAT I REALLY WANT FROM YOUICHI.
HE SAID HIS PARENTS WOULDN'T LET HIM MOVE IN IF THEY KNEW I WAS THE CARETAKER.
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT, SAY IT TO THE NEW KID
WELL—I'M NOT REALLY A CARETAKER, TO BEGIN WITH
grumble
IT'S SUNDAY, MY PRECIOUS DAY-OFF
grumble
YOU'RE THE ONE QUALIFIED TO BE A REAL ESTATE AGENT YOU SHOULD TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING
EXCUSE YOU?
Want me to buy you a suit?
YEAH, THAT'S PROBABLE

SIZZLE
CRACK
POP
WHERE'S YOUICHI?
DON'T KNOW
I BET HE'S HELPING OUT WITH SAKURA!
CLINK
SIZZLE
YEAH, I ASKED HIM THE OTHER DAY
IF HE WANTED TO LIVE HERE, ON THE WEEKENDS.
SIZZLE
SAKURA!?
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT SAKURA KAZUAK FROM THE AD AGENCY?
POUR
HE SOUNDS LIKE AN OLD GEEZER
WHEN I WENT OUT TO DRINK WITH HIM, HE SAID HE FELT RELAXED HERE, SURROUNDED BY THE TREES
SIZZLE
SIZZLE
POP
SIZZLE
POP
SIZZLE
I'LL LET HIM LIVE IN THE EIGHT TATAMI MAT ROOM AT HALF THE RENT

SIZZLE
POP
POP
BESIDES, IT LOOKS LIKE YOUICHI IS FOND OF SAKURAI-KUN.
I CAN TELL
WORKING IN COMMERCIAL BUSINESS IS REAL TOUGH. HE NEEDS SOME TIME TO REFRESH HIMSELF
HE'S NO LONGER A CHILD
HE'S EVEN MADE SOME FRIENDS AT COLLEGE
FORGET ABOUT HIS FATHER.
SIZZLE
IT'S TIME TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT YOICHI.
. YOU KNOW, KIPPEI .
POP
POP
SIZZLE
POP

"KIPPEI"
HE SAID TO ME, "TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUICHI."
I'M THE ONE WHO LAST SAW HIM.
HOW ON EARTH CAN I FORGET ABOUT HIM?
SIZZLE
SIZZLE
"I'M TAKING AYAKO TO THE HOSPITAL."

THERE'S JUST ONE THING YOU CAN DO FOR ME
HUH?


THANK YOU.
I CAN TAKE HER INSTEAD OF YOU.
RIGHT NOW? BUT YOU DIDN'T SLEEP LAST NIGHT
BUT I'VE ALREADY DELIVERED IT I CAN MANAGE THE REST
YOU SURE?
WHERE'S THE LARGE PAINTING?

TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUICHI FOR ME
I SAID, "YOU CAN COUNT ON ME," THEN
DO YOU THINK I CAN FORGET THAT?

SIZZLE
SIZZLE
SIZZLE
I KNOW HOW HARD IT IS.
POP
POP
POP
ARE YOU.
MAKING SEAFOOD TEMPURA? LET ME HAVE SOME
POP
POP
POP
Hmph.
NOT NOW I'M GOING TO SERVE THESE WITH SOBA WATER.

OH, I SEE
YOU'LL STAY HERE ONLY WHEN YOU HAVE TIME OR ON THE WEEKENDS.
THAT'S RIGHT
YOU'RE RICH.
RUSTLE
ZIP
WHAT ABOUT YOUR APART-MENT?
MY APART-MENT?
WELL,
I LIVE THERE, TOO

FUJIMOTO IS GOING TO LIVE IN THE ROOM NEXT TO MINE
HEY!
Sucks.
SLUMP
THAT NEW APART-MENT IS MY CASTLE!!
NEVER.
I WAS THINKING IF I SHOULD RENT YOUR APART-MENT
NO WAY
I might as well live there for you
YOSHITOMI-SAN IS YOUNGER THAN KASHIWAGI-SAN. BUT HE CALLS HIM "MASAFUMI," NOT WITH "-KUN" OR ANYTHING
YOU SHOULD CALL HIM AS "FUJIMOTO-KUN" OR "FUJIMOTO-SAN." YOU KNOW, HE'S OLDER THAN YOU.
Sakurai
YOU DON'T GET ALONG WITH FUJIMOTO-KUN, DO YOU?
Don't talk back!
ONCE YOU GROW UP, AGE PLAYS NO ROLE
RUSTLE

OH, YEAH
Give back my pillow.
Feelings are out of control, right?
I JUST DON'T LIKE HIM.
YOU NEED NO REASON TO LIKE SOMEONE AND NOW I KNOW SAME GOES FOR DISLIKING PEOPLE.
IF YOU AREN'T HERE TO HELP, GO AWAY
You're being annoying
It's new.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.
STOMP STOMP STOMP
OH, MINAGAWA!
HEY, WAIT A SECOND
I FEEL LIKE I'M SUFFOCATING WITH TAKEO-SAN.
YOU CAN HELP ME THEN.
SHOUTA IS HELPING SAKURAI-SAN.
TURN
IS EVERY-THING FINISHED WITH SAKURAI-SAN?
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT IS IT?

CAN I SWAP ROOMS WITH SAKURAI-SAN?
WHAT FOR?
BY THE WAY,
I DON'T TALK MUCH, EITHER.
YEAH, I KNOW THAT,
BUT STILL
I DON'T MIND AT ALL
SAKURAI-SAN'S ROOM IS ON THE FIRST FLOOR AND SMALL. IT'S NOT REMODELED AND IT'S CRAMPED
THUD
I WANT TO LIVE IN A ROOM CLOSER TO YOURS.
YOUR ROOM IS ON THE FIRST FLOOR, RIGHT?
?

BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU.
. WHY?
NO REASON FOR MY WANTING TO KNOW YOU BETTER.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND
AREN'T YOU AWARE OF IT?
HUH?
JUST AS I THOUGHT YOUR EYES GET BIGGER WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
SHARE

YOU KNOW, THE COLOR OF YOUR EYES CHANGE WHEN YOU LOOK AT SAKURAI-SAN.
RATTLE
I.
..WOULD LIKE YOU TO LOOK AT ME WITH.
THOSE EYES.

BAT!
WHIP
WHAT?
AH.
YOU BASTARD!
WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO?
OUCH!! YOU LITTLE BRAT!
THUMP_THUMP
JUST RUN!!
STRUGGLE
RUN, YOU-CHAN!
IT HURTS!
STRUGGLE
SLIDE
WHAT'S GOING ON..?
SO NOISY
ARGH!
GYAAA!
BAM
BAM

SAKURAI-SAN
YES?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
DO YOU THINK MY EYES LOOK DIFFERENT?
HUH?
FUJIMOTO SAID MY EYES GET BIGGER WHEN I LOOK AT

...YOU.
BLUSH
Uh

Too close Way too close!
Fu. FUJIMOTO?
HE SAID WHAT?
EYES? WHAT IS T WITH YOUR EYES?
CREAK/
YOUICHI
DINNER-TIME!

COME DOWN QUICK, THE SOBA'S READY!
PUSH

SAKURAI-KUN.
FINALLY, YOU'RE HERE
IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
Noisy bunch
BUZZ
BUZZ
SCUFFLE
SCUFFLE
SCUFFLE
HURRY!!
TAKE YOUR SEATS NOW!!
The soba'll get soggy!
RATTLE
YOU TOO, YOUICHI!
Yoshitomi-san will get mad at you!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LISTEN!
HE'S A PERVERT!
I'M NOT. DON'T TOUCH ME!!
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
Take!

DON'T BOTHER YOU-CHAN!
Here
Eat some more?
SCUFFLE
SCUFFLE
IT REMINDS ME OF THE OLD DAYS.
YES, QUITE SO.
IT'S GOTTEN SO LIVELY OVERNIGHT
I HOPE I'LL ENJOY MYSELF, TOO.
I HEARD IT WAS FUN LIVING HERE
Enough. Be quiet and eat.
It hurts!! Why does everyone scold me?
Argh!

WOW! WHAT'S THIS? SO QUICK TO FINISH!
Another helping, please
Me, too
PLEASE
KIPPEL
LOOKS LIKE HE'S HAVING FUN
Enjoy every bite
SLURP
SLURP
SLUURP
I SEE HE'S ACTUALLY ENJOYING HIMSELF
IT'S NOT LIKE HE'S PRETENDING TO BE HAPPY
I THINK

IT'S
GOOD
TBC

Hidaka Shoko

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vol 2

release date: 12/25/11 rakanaga.com

第 II 話

The next few pages are a dream sequence...

WHO SAID THIS HOUSE IS LIKE A CASTLE COVERED ALL OVER WITH VINES ?
ME!
I SAID THAT
IT'S SEGREGATED FROM THE OUTER WORLD
AND YOU'RE THE PRINCE!
NOTHING YOU HAVE TO DO OR TO THINK ABOUT
BECAUSE EVERYONE AROUND YOU CARES FOR YOU
YOU KNOW
YOU'RE A CHILD OF UNCLE YOUSUKE!
SO. YOU'RE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW IN YOUR FATHER'S FOOT-STEPS!
NO.

NO...
SHOUTA WOULD NEVER SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT
SO, I KNOW I AM JUST IMAGINING THIS
IN MY MIND.
BUT I CAN'T CHANGE
EITHER THIS HOUSE ..
OR MYSELF
YOU-CHAN, I PICKED HIM UP!!

SLIDE
YOUR FRIEND I BROUGHT HIM WITH US HE COLLAPSED AT THE STATION
I'm tired.
MY FRIEND?
HIM?
!
DROOP
THE MAN YOU CAME BACK WITH YESTERDAY

I
YOU LOOKED HAPPY TALKING WITH HIM THEN
HUH. I'M NOT HIS.
GROAN

WHAT-EVER
JUST HELP ME OUT!
I remember I was irritated though
I DON'T KNOW

CLACK
YAWN
SLEEPY

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
" YOUR EYES GET BIGGER."

" WHEN YOU LOOK AT SAKURAI-SAN, THE COLOR OF YOUR EYES CHANGE
"AREN'T YOU AWARE OF IT?"
SAKURAI-SAN IS NOW STAYING WITH US
BRUSH
BRUSH
BRUSH
OH.
AH.
HI.
GOOD MORNING.
GOOH MORNING.
YOU'RE EARLY
I HAVE THINGS TO DO AT THE COLLEGE

YOU'RE WORKING ON A PICTURE WITH FLOWERS, RIGHT? LET ME TAKE A LOOK WHEN IT'S DONE
WIPE
YES
GARGLE GARGLE GARGLE
HUH.
OH.
I SEE
PAINTING?
GARGLE GARGLE
SHHH
WHAT?
Did I say something wrong?
?
!
WHIP
SPLOSH SPLOSH
SPLOSH
N-NO.
I'LL SHOW YOU THEN

CREAK
SPLOSH
SPLOSH
SPLOSH
SHHH
SAKURAI-SAN.
WILL YOU BE HOME TONIGHT?
LET ME SEE...
I'LL BE LATE TONIGHT, SO I'LL GO BACK TO MY APARTMENT
YOUR APART-MENT?
YEAH. IT MIGHT BE THE LAST TRAIN I CAN TAKE I DON'T WANT TO BE A NUISANCE TO YOU
I'LL TEXT YOSHITOMI-SAN ABOUT IT

TEXT HIM?
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
YEAH
HUH?
STEP
SLIDE
THUD

NO ONE BOTHERS ME
IT'S QUIET IN THE MORNING
SLIDE
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TALK ABOUT
SPLOSH SPLOSH SPLOSH
CLATTER CLATTER
IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T WANT TO HANG AROUND WITH THEM.
"YOU DON'T...KE HANGING WITH US?"

SOME PEOPLE, LIKE FUJIMOTO
TRIED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH ME OUT OF CURIOSITY BUT
EVERY-ONE GETS SICK OF ME EVENTUALLY
PAT
PAT
I DON'T MEAN TO IGNORE THEM, BUT I FIND MY-SELF AT A LACK OF WORDS
IT'S DOESN'T MATTER WHO I'M WITH OR WHAT WE TALK ABOUT I JUST GET BORED
"YOU DON'T LIKE ME?"
"I CAN'T TELL WHAT YOU'RE THINKING."
"WHY DO YOU IGNORE ME?"

BRUSH
BRUSH
BRUSH
IT COULD BE I'M CRAZY
I FEEL LIKE MY WORDS SLIP OUT OF MY MIND
SOMETIMES
I FEEL I'M LEFT BEHIND FROM THE WORLD
BRUSH
BRUSH
"YOUICHI."

IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DRAW JUST PAINT WHATEVER YOU LIKE
KEEP PAINTING, AND SOME IMAGES
WILL COME TO YOU NATURALLY
THAT'S YOUR OWN WAY OF YOUR PAINING
LET HIM LEARN BASICS FIRST
CHATTER
CHATTER
WHAT'S GOING ON OVER HERE?
I HEARD ABOUT YOUR NEW WORK FROM THE BOARDERS.
CHATTER
CHATTER
WHAT'S THE MOTIF?
IS THIS FROM THE SERIES?
WOW
NICE!
HAHA
HAHA

MY FATHER WAS LIKE A KING.
EVERY-ONE LOVED HIM
HE WAS ALWAYS SURROUNDED BY MANY FRIENDS
SEE YOU, SON.
YOUICH
CATTER

"...GOT IN AN ACCIDENT AND..."
"YES?"
"LISTEN YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER..."
"YOUICHI-"

DID.
YOU HEAR?
WHISPER
IT'S STRANGE SO THE POLICE ARE
WHISPER
OH. MY
THEY FOUND A WILL BY YOUSUKE-SAN DATED THE DAY BEFORE THE ACCIDENT
WHISPER
AYAKO-SAN HAD BEEN ILL FOR LONG
WHISPER
IT'S ONLY
A RUMOR, BUT
WHISPER
WHISPER
THEY COULD HAVE COMMITTED SUICIDE.

HE DIDN'T LIKE ME WORKING IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL FACTORY
YOU KNOW, HIGH RISK, HIGH GAIN.
TAKE-SAN TOLD ME YOU CHANGED JOBS AGAIN.
YEAH, RIGHT
HI!
WHAT BROUGHT YOU ALL THE WAY HERE?
PLEASE GET OUT OF THE WAY, YOU-CHAN.
I HAVE ANOTHER BOX TO CARRY
OH, SORRY
RATTLE
RATTLE
. SHOUTA. YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY DON'T YOU?
YOUR FATHER IS TAKING VERY GOOD CARE OF YOU.
WHY DO YOU WORK SO HARD?

I DON'T WANT TO GET ANY-THING FROM HIM.
HUH?
YOU MAY NOT UNDER-STAND, BUT
THEY WON'T LET ME HAVE ANYTHING THAT'S MY OWN.
NO WAY I'M GOING TO TALK WITH THEM,
SO.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HUH.
I GUESS TAKE-SAN ASKED YOU TO PERSUADE ME TO GO TO COLLEGE
YOU'RE RIGHT

THUD
YOU KNOW,
WE STICK TOGETHER ALL THE TIME.
BUT YOU'VE NEVER OPENED UP TO ME
ISN'T IT BECAUSE YOU THINK NOTHING OF ME?
YOU JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND!
YOU SAY NOTHING, BUT ONLY AGREE TO EVERYTHING OTHERS SAY.
YOU TRY TO DO WHAT-EVER PEOPLE EXPECT YOU AND I THINK IT'S SOMETHING.
BUT, THE TRUTH IS, YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING OR ANYONE!

SHOUTA.
YOU'RE KIND AND GOOD TO ME. BUT YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING TO SUPPORT ME. THAT'S WHY I WANT TO LIVE ON MY OWN.
BUT SHOUTA.
I DON'T WANT TO STAY UNDER THE CARE OF THE MINAGAWA FAMILY ANYMORE!
YOU DON'T LIKE THE FORMALITY OF THAT FAMILY, DO YOU?
YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND HOW UNEASY I CAN BE WITH THEM!?
YOU-CHAN,

IT'S HIGH TIME FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN LIFE, ISN'T IT?
YOU KEEP DRAWING PICTURES
BUT ARE YOU QUITE SURE YOU LOVE DOING IT? YOU DRAW PICTURES BECAUSE KATSURAGI-SAN TOLD YOU TO, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
AND THE BOARDING HOUSE '
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DEAL WITH IT YOU SHOULD TALK TO YOSHITOMI-SAN.
YOU SEEM AS IF
...YOU'RE LIVING YOUR FATHER'S LIFE.

HEY, MINA-GAWA?
AH!
HERE
SORRY!
I'M COMING
LOOK
I'VE GOT TO GO
...
NOT TRUE
I'M NOT LIVING HIS LIFE
BUT
I'VE NEVER HEARD YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT-
THAT'S NOT TRUE!

SORRY
I'M GOING
I JUST—
"WHY"
"WHY YOU HAD TO DIE."
"YOUSUKE."
"YOUSUKE."
"YOUSUKE."

YOU-CHAN DROPPED BY JUST A WHILE AGO
HE'S NOT GOING TO PERSUADE ME. I WON'T LISTEN TO HIM.
SHOUTA?
WHAT IS IT

Huh?
Persuade?
I'VE NEVER ASKED HIM TO.
I just let him know where you work.

"YOUSUKE."

. IT'S NOT FUN TO BE IGNORED
BUT IT MIGHT BE QUITE STRESSFUL TO BE UNDER SOMEONE'S THUMB LIKE YOU-CHAN.
Shouta?
OH, NEVER MIND.
I'M AFRAID I SAID SOMETHING TO UPSET HIM.
SHOUTA.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU SAID TO HIM,

. TAKE-SAN,
I THINK HE'S CHANGING.
HUH?
RIGHT I KNOW
...but you owe him an apology.
HE'S STARTING TO SHOW HIS FEELINGS MORE.

THOSE SEEDS
WHAT FLOWERS WERE THEY?

THEY WERE IN MY FATHER'S DRAWER
I THINK I PLANTED SEEDS WITH MY MOTHER LONG AGO
BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WELL

IT'S NOT LIKE SHOUTA TO GET ALONG WITH SOMEONE
YEAH! I'M GOING TO PLANT THEM WITH SAKURAI-SAN.
STOMP
STOMP
I found lots of seeds
CAN I HAVE SOME?
YES
Why it's open?
YOU-CHAN!

DIG
DIG
THEY DIED BUT IT WAS NOT MY FAULT!
I was too busy to take care of.
I TOLD YOU...
FWUMP
Shouta won't do anything
I REMOVED THEM
TAKE THESE
IF YOU WANT TO PLANT AGAIN, I HAVE SOME MORE
I'M NOT ASKING YOU WHY

WHAT KIND OF SEEDS?
I DON'T KNOW
IS IT THE RIGHT TIME TO PLANT THEM?
It's still cold
DON'T KNOW
AND PAY ME THE RENT
Bye
HMPH
NEVER MIND THAT REMEMBER NOT TO BARGE IN.
HEY, WAIT!
WHAT'S WITH THAT ATTITUDE!
"YOUR HOUSE IS SPLENDID."
"THE TREES OUTSIDE ARE GOOD TOO."
"I LIKE IT HERE A LOT."
DIG
KIND OF A WEIRDO
CHUCKLE
HE'S REALLY GOING TO WORK IN THE GARDEN THIS LATE AT NIGHT?

WHAT SAKURAI-SAN SAID TO ME .
DRAWING FLOWERS
YOU LIKE DRAWING
STUCK IN MY MIND

EVEN SMALL, SUBTLE THINGS AND HIS EXPRESSIONS. THEY ALL ACCUMULATE IN MY MIND AND I CAN REMEMBER THEM ANYTIME.

WHEN.
FROM WHEN I STARTED TO FEEL LIKE THIS?
FROM WHEN.
NOBODY HAS EVER...
SAKURAI-SAN.
...INFLUENCED ME LIKE HIM.
I LIKE TALKING WITH HIM. I FEEL HAPPY BEING WITH HIM AND...
"YOUICHI"

YOUICHI."
WHEN HE TURNS TO ME
MY BREATH AND

MY BODY...
RATTLE

I GOT LOTS OF HANDOUTS TO READ
I SHOULD GO BACK TO MY APARTMENT TAKE A BATH AND GO TO SLEEP
HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A NIGHT OWL
HE MIGHT HAVE GONE TO SLEEP
I WANT TO SEE YOUICHI. BUT
CHATTER
CHATTER
It's Eleven.
RUMBLE
RUSTLE RUSTLE
RUSTLE

SHIT
IF ONLY HE HADN'T MOVED IN
OR THE OTHER WAY AROUND BECAUSE HE MOVED IN WITH ME
I'M NOT WITHOUT CAUSE IN MY HEART
DEFINITELY
I MUST BE CRAZY
WHY AM I WORRYING SO SINCERELY?
WHY DO I FEEL AS IF I WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S BEEN LIVING HERE ALL ALONE?
BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW I SHOW MY FEELINGS
THE WHAT'S THIS
...OVER-WHELMING FEELING?
WHY IS IT
HUH?
IT'S NOW I'VE ALWAYS BEEN

...RESIDING IN ME?
SAKURAI-SAN.?
HUH. ?
YOU'RE STILL AWAKE?

SO.. I.. WEL...
I WAS ABOUT TO GO BACK TO MY APART-MENT.
BUT
YOUICHI ?
GRAB
WHAT!?

SAKURAI-SAN.
HUH??

H-
HEY...
W-
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, YOUICHI!?
SHOVE
SQUEEZE

AH...
SAKURAI-SA—
YOUICHI.

...
YOU...
ICHI.

第 12 話

!
SAKURA-
SA

AHH!
MMM...
HAA
HAA
HH
MM..
UNF!

SAKURAI-
SA-
AH...
SORR...
I...
YOU-CHAN. SAKURAI-SAN. WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING THERE?

I'LL GO!
BAM
WHAM
RATTLE

SPLOSH
SPLOT
SPLASH

IT WAS JUST WHAT I THOUGHT
HAA...
SPLASH
lick
HIS AWKWARD MOVEMENT.
BE-WILDERED AND CONFUSED
TREMBLING LIPS

HE
...DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING.

CREAK
CREAK
MINAGAWA?
IT'S ME. FUJIMOTO
ARE YOU STILL AWAKE?
RATTLE
IS HE IN?

MINA-
GAWA.
HEY
MAY
I COME
IN?
SLIDE
. WHAT
IS IT?
YOU DIDN'T
ANSWER. YOU
DON'T MIND ME
COMING IN,
DO YOU?
NOTHING.
I JUST
WANTED TO
SEE YOU.

MAY I HAVE A SEAT?
HEY
I SAID I WANTED TO SEE YOU. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY-THING TO SAY ?
THE OTHER DAY
YOU TOLD ME MY EYES CHANGE WHEN I LOOK AT SAKURAI-SAN.

WHAT WERE THEY LIKE?
WELL, THEY WERE
LIKE ..
BURNING LIKE CRAZY

YOU'RE ALWAYS ALONE AND DON'T GET ALONG WITH ANYONE.
YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT YOU.
BUT, YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE FOR THAT
BUT ISN'T IT HARD TO BE ALONE ALL THE TIME?
IT WAS LIKE YOU WERE DRIFTING IN A DIFFERENT TIME THAN OURS
AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, MY EYES WERE ALWAYS CHASING AFTER YOU.
A LOT OF THE TIME, IT'S EASIER TO GET BY IF YOU MINGLE WITH OTHERS, REGARDLESS OF HOW YOU REALLY FEEL, YOU KNOW?

AND NOTICED YOUR LOOK,
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STOP MYSELF FROM HOLDING YOU TIGHT IN MY ARMS.
. IF I WERE SAKURAI-SAN.
HOW IS SAKURAI-SAN?
IS HE STILL STAYING AWAY FROM YOU?
ISN'T IT FRUITLESS
TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HIM?

THE MORE I GET TO KNOW HIM, THE CLEARER I SEE

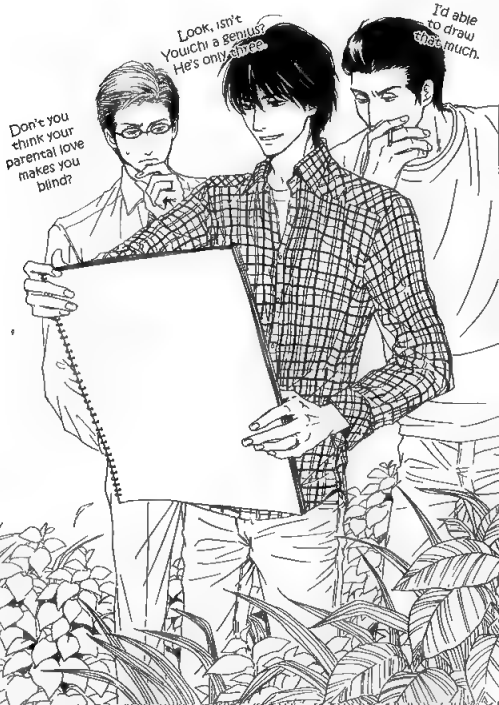
WHAT SHOULD I

A WIDE GAP LIES BETWEEN US

Hi! The second volume is out!
Thank you very much for purchasing one.
I'm enjoying drawing manga with many older characters in it. Actually, it's not easy to add a Boy's Love plot in this kind of a story. (To begin with, Sakurai-san isn't exactly a "boy"...)
I'm sure it's heading for the right direction and I'm having much fun. Releasing one volume a year may not be fast enough, but I hope you'll look for the next volume too. See you again!!

Thank you very much everyone for helping me out! Thank you for your help, Sacchan!

His father and father-like figures. Kashiwagi-san aged 33, Yousuke-papa 31, and Yoshitomi-san 29.



DOES ICE FLOWER BLOOM? 2

RUTILE
R
COLLECTION

花は咲くか 2

DOES THE FLOWER BLOOM?

日高ショーコ

発行
幻冬舎コミックス

9784344820418

ISBN978-4-344-82041-8

C9979 ¥619E

1929979006198

雑誌 54250-40
定価：本体619円+税
発行＝幻冬舎コミックス
発売＝幻冬舎

Sakurai, who works for an ad agency, met an unsociable young man Youichi, an art college student and an owner of a big old house used as a boarding house. He starts to visit there often. Sakurai thought Hongawa was hard to get along with, but soon he realized he has a crush on Youichi. He doesn't know how he should settle his feelings, so one day Youichi asks Sakurai if he can come visit his house. Sakurai becomes confused with the sudden change of Youichi's attitude and ...!?